

I wish to comment in support of this Petition.

The United States is no longer bound by international agreement to require Morse code proficiency as a condition of access to HF frequencies, and should act immediately to bring its rules in line with the rest of the international community.

Proficiency in sending and receiving Morse code does not provide an indication of the individual's technical understanding or ability.

Upon removal of Element 1 from requirements for licensing, a large number of stations able to utilize non-local, non-line-of-sight communications will become available. The value of this tremendous resource must not be overlooked, and would be of considerable benefit to Homeland Security.

The amateur service is currently the only service in which Morse code is still used. Officially, all agencies of the United States government ended their use of Morse code at least as far back as 1999. There can be no valid argument that retaining Morse code requirements is of any benefit to the public interest, convenience and necessity, since even in times of national crisis, there would not be a call for Morse code operators by agencies of the United States government.

Conversely, in the event of local, regional or national emergency, there are calls for amateur operators to assist in providing communications where public networks (telephone, cellular) fail or are dramatically overloaded.

Any increase in the number of stations outfitted and allowed to operate in the non-line-of-sight bands can only be of benefit to the residents of the United States; therefore, this proposal is heavily in favor of the public interest.

All existing band plans should be maintained, especially with respect to those portions of the amateur bands specifically dedicated to CW operation, in order that those who wish to continue to practice this mode are not impacted by the influx of new HF operators.